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ABSTRACT

This action research project evaluated an intervention to improve the organizational skills of middle school students with grade point averages below 2.0. Students' lack of organizational skills was documented by means of parent and student surveys, grade point averages, and progress and deficiency reports exhibiting frequently missing homework assignments. The intervention included daily teacher checklists that were reviewed and monitored by the student's advisor, weekly conferences with parents to increase parent involvement, and instruction in organizational skills and strategies as part of the weekly advisory curriculum. Post-intervention data indicated the action plan was not as successful as anticipated. It was concluded that students' backgrounds and emotional and medical needs were major factors affecting their organizational skills. (Six appendices include surveys, record sheets, and parent materials. (Contains 29 references.) (EV)

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LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS INTERFERE WITH ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

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ABSTRACT

The following action research describes a possible program for improving the organizational skills of students with a grade point average below 2.0. The targeted population consisted of sixth and eighth grade students in a middle school setting, located in a middle class suburban community in the Midwest. The lack of organizational skills was documented with parent and student surveys, grade point averages, and evidence in the form of progress and deficiency reports that exhibit frequently missing homework assignments.

Analysis of problem evidence indicated that there was a definite lack of organizational skills among the targeted middle school students. This lack of organizational skills affected the students' academic success. Review of the research indicated that students were not formally introduced to organizational skills through the curriculum, parental involvement was minimal, and the students with poor academic success had low self esteem.

A review of the solution strategies suggested by other researchers, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the development of daily teacher checklists to be reviewed and monitored by the student's advisor. In addition, weekly conferences with parents to create more parent involvement was put into practice. The teaching of organizational skills and strategies was implemented into the weekly advisory curriculum.

According to the post intervention data, the action plan was not as successful as anticipated. It was discovered that a student's background and emotional and medical needs had a great effect on a child's organizational skills. This information must be made known before any program can be put into effect. Once this is taken into consideration, proper organizational skills can be achieved through a specific curriculum that is consistently taught throughout the early and middle school years and through constant modeling and reinforcement both at school and in the home.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The targeted students in the sixth and eighth grade classes exhibit poor organizational skills which interfere with academic success. Evidence includes student record information, student surveys, and parent surveys.

Immediate Problem Context

The action research project took place in a suburban middle school. Enrollment and data were reported as of September, 30, 1997 in the school report card.

Table 1 describes the racial and ethnic background and total enrollment. The target school is composed of students in grades six, seven, and eight. There were three targeted eighth grade classrooms and two targeted sixth grade classrooms. The majority of the school is White, while the rest of the population is Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American.

Table 1
Racial/Ethnic Background and Total Enrollment of Target School

White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Total
84.7%	1.8%	4.6%	8.5%	0.5%	567

The percentages of low-income and limited English proficient students are described as being 4.4% low income and 1.4% having limited English proficiency. Low income students are from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. There are relatively few low income students in attendance. Limited English Proficient students are

those found to be eligible for bilingual education.

The target school has an attendance rate of 96%. The student mobility rate is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave a school during the school year. The mobility rate of the target school is 3.9%. Chronic truants are students who were absent from school without valid cause for 10% or more of the 180 school days. The target school has a 0% rate of chronic truancy, with zero number of chronic truants. Student attendance is not a concern.

Teachers in the target school are 100% White, with 33% being male and 67% being female, for a total of 39 teachers. Teachers in the entire district are also 100% White, with 12.7% being male and 87.3% being female. There are a total of 110 teachers in the entire school district. Teachers include all school personnel categorized by the district as classroom teachers. Information is based on full time equivalents. Special support services such as Chapter I, LEP (Limited English Proficiency), gifted and talented, and special education ensure that each child has the opportunity to perform to his/her highest potential.

The strong educational program includes advisory, mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, and reading. The exploratory program augments the core program to assure a well rounded educational experience that includes physical education, health, art, music, home arts, foreign language, computer education, and industrial technology. In addition, elective courses such as vocal and instrumental music, drama, history through the arts, computer animation, and other courses offer the students the opportunity to discover potential interests and talents. Table 2 shows time devoted to the teaching of core subjects. It is the average number of minutes of instruction per one week. English includes all language arts courses.

Table 2

Time Devoted to the Teaching of Core Subjects

Subject	Mathematics	Science	English	Social Science
Time	40 minutes	40 minutes	90 minutes	40 minutes

The advisory class meets first period each morning and is a non-graded class. It serves a variety of purposes. Most of the correspondence between the school and the community takes place during this time, and important information regarding school functions is distributed. Attendance is taken, forms are passed out and filled in, and records are maintained by the advisor. The advisory period is also reserved for the viewing and discussion of the Channel One News Program. Most important, however, is that the advisor is a contact person, not only for parents, but for the student as well. An advisor is the one person the student can go to with school related concerns or problems, knowing that they will always have someone "on their side" to listen to what they have to say. The targeted group of students was selected from the researchers' advisory classes.

Since 1997, with the addition of two new wings, the target school is divided by grade level, with sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students situated in their own wing of the building. Each wing contains the core classrooms of math, science, reading, social studies, and language arts. A special education classroom is also assigned to each grade level. An additional wing is devoted to physical education and fine arts. The fine arts classrooms include a separate room for band, chorus, orchestra, foreign language, art, technology, home economics, and computers.

The school offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities to enhance the students' total school experience. In addition to five interscholastic sports of cross country, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, and track, students are also able to enjoy twelve intramural sports. Students are offered eight musical performance groups, ten clubs, student senate, yearbook, and journalism. Having many choices of clubs and activities encourages the students to not only be involved, but to remain academically eligible. Ninety-five percent of the student body participates in at least one activity. Several communities combine to form the student body.

The Surrounding Communities

The target school includes students who reside in four suburban communities, encompassing an area of approximately 7.5 square miles. Families served are 87% Caucasian, with the remaining 13% crossing over many ethnic groups, making the population rich with diversity. The annual bilingual census indicates a population which represents over 30 different language backgrounds. The vast majority of families fall into the middle or upper-middle class category. Enrollment is slowly growing due to new construction sites of single family homes and

townhouses. New teachers are being hired to maintain a reasonable classroom size. Table 3 describes the ethnic background of the entire district.

Table 3

Racial/Ethnic Background and Total Enrollment of District

White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Total
84.3%	1.6%	5.7%	8.2%	0.2%	1,716

The target school district is composed of three elementary schools and one middle school. Each elementary school has its own principal and support staff which includes nurse, secretary, and library technician. A social worker, school psychologist, and speech instructor are shared by all three elementary schools. The middle school has a principal, assistant principal, and the same support staff as the elementary schools. However, the middle school has its own social worker and psychologist. The district administration consists of a superintendent, assistant superintendent, and a business manager.

The average teacher salary for the district is $44, 348.00, and the average administrator salary is $85,896.00. Special education teachers are not included in this salary scale. Table 4 describes teacher administrator characteristics for the entire school district. Teacher data in this section include classroom teachers plus other teachers such as those specializing in art, physical education, music, technology, home economics, and foreign language. There are approximately the same number of teachers with a Master's Degree as there are without a Master's Degree as shown by the District Report Card in Table 4.

Community involvement in the school is extensive. A parent-teacher organization (Home School Council), a citizen's advisory council, the Instrumental League, and athletic boosters are highly supportive of the school. These organizations provide volunteers, fund raising activities, and assist in planning programs. PALS (Partners Assisting Learning in Schools) is an organization of community members that offer after school time to provide students with an educational mentor. Although community involvement is extensive, and parents are willing

participants, students coming from this site still lack organizational skills.

Table 4

Teacher/Administrator Characteristics for the District

Average Teaching Experience	Teachers with Bachelor's Degree	Teachers with Master's Degree and above	Student Teacher Ratio	Student Administrator Ratio
12.9 yrs.	50.6%	49.4%	17.2:1	214.5:1

National Context of the Problem

Organizational skills are necessary abilities that a student must use to acquire knowledge and process information. These skills include time management, setting goals and organizing study time and work materials. There's a strong correlation between a good student and time management and organization (Wallis, 1998). Being poorly organized is a problem for many teenage students. Young people need to learn that being organized is essential to success in school and in work.

Students who are disorganized often waste a great deal of time looking for misplaced assignments and materials. They often become frustrated when the needed materials are lost or misplaced. This frustration leads to a defeatist attitude, and the child eventually gives up. Class work does not seem to be the problem, as the teacher is in charge of organizing the materials and monitoring the progress. "It is the homework that suffers when organization suffers. Students fail to complete homework much more often than class work" (Glasser, 1990, p. 94). Middle school is an especially key time for organizational skills instruction. Students are developmentally ready to use strategies and monitor their learning at a time when the curriculum begins to demand greater organizational skill (Leal & Rafoth, 1993).

The proper organizational skills will empower students to manage the demands of school. Using organizational skills is a learned strategy which enables students to systematically plan, record, and encode, so they will be able to more successfully access information (Wallis, 1998). Because organizational skills are learned, all students can be taught to use them, not just those who

would eventually learn them on their own. It is not feasible to teach students all the facts they need to know; teachers must provide them, instead, with the skills of organization they will need as they continue in the process of learning (Bowers & Farr, 1984). Not only is lack of organization a national problem, but it is also present at this site.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

The following evidence indicates that lack of organizational skills can negatively affect student progress. The evidence was gathered by means of surveys administered to parents and students, and by a review of student records.

Parent Survey

A letter (see Appendix A) was sent home to parents explaining the action research project. Surveys (see Appendix B) were distributed to parents of students in five advisory classes, two 6th grade and three 8th grade. Of the 68 surveys sent, 37 out of 41 8th grade parents, and 25 out of 27 6th grade parents completed and returned the survey. Table 5 shows the parent survey results in percentages. According to the survey results, the majority of parents asked their children about their day, called Homework Hot line, checked their children's assignment notebooks and checked to see if homework was completed. This shows that parents feel that they are involved in helping their children with organizational skills. However,the majority reported that their children seldom displayed organizational skills without assistance. Another area where parents felt their children were lacking was in organizing their time. The majority of parents reported that extracurricular or outside activities interfered with homework completion and that their children seldom set up a study schedule to complete long term projects. Students were also surveyed on how they perceived their own organizational skills. The evidence for lack of organizational skills in students found in the parent survey was also consistent in the student survey.

Student Survey

Student perceptions of their weaknesses in the area of organizational skills were identified through a student survey (see Appendix C). Table 6 shows the student survey results in percentages. Like their parents, students identified time management skills as a weakness. A

total of 68 students were given a survey to complete during advisory in the first week of September, 1999. Ten minutes were given for completion of the survey. Of the 68 students surveyed, 41 were 8th grade students 27 were 6th grade students. The majoriry of students reported that their locker is not well organized, do not have a specific place to do homework, and believe they are not organized. Also, the majority indicated that they never put homework before outside activities. This is consistent with the parent findings. Students appear to find the day-to-day organizational skills, like record keeping, easier to accomplish. Almost half of the students surveyed reported that they sometimes never write down their assignments and due dates, have extra supplies in their lockers, keep notebooks or folders for each class, check to make sure they have all materials before coming to or leaving school, turn in assignments on time and are happy with their grades. Data from the students surveyed provides evidence that students lack organizational skills. Student Records were inspected to obtain more evidence of the targeted students organizational deficiencies.

Student Record Information

Based on the results from the parent and student surveys and teacher recommendation, 15 students with poor organizational skills were identified. The majority of the targeted student's records contained information confirming that poor organizational skills hindered their academic performance. Seventy-five percent of the targeted students had at least one deficiency report, indicating a mid-quarter grade of D or F, in their file. Sixty-five percent of the deficiency reports identified poor organizational skills as a problem. Sixty-two percent of the reports indicated deficiencies in homework completion and time management. Seventy-eight percent of the targeted students had a grade point average of 2.0 or lower for the 4th quarter of the 1998-1999 school year. These students also had at least one comment on their report card indicating time management and late assignments as a problem. Poor organizational skills is a recognizable problem for the targeted middle school students. There are several possible causes for this problem.

Probable Causes

The literature reveals that most authors are in agreement about lack of organizational skills being a problem for middle school students. Causes can be categorized into four main areas: organizational skills are not included in the curriculum, time management, parental involvement

and student self-esteem.

Table 5

Results of Parent Survey: Organizational Skills

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Every Day
How often do you ask your child about his/her day?	0%	2%	6%	19%	73%
How often do you call Homework Hot line?	10%	13%	26%	16%	35%
How often do you check your child's assignment notebook?	4%	5%	26%	27%	38%
How often do you check to see if your child's homework is complete?	5%	10%	25%	26%	34%
Does your child display organizational skills?	11%	29%	21%	15%	24%
How often does you child have school materials organized for return to school?	13%	16%	15%	21%	35%
How often does you child complete tasks on time?	6%	11%	15%	20%	48%
How often does your child have conflicts with extracurricular or outside activities that interfere with homework completion?	8%	6%	10%	29%	47%
How often does your child set up a study schedule to complete long term projects such a book reports?	29%	24%	19%	11%	17%
How often does your child bring necessary materials home to complete assignments?	13%	10%	13%	34%	30%

Table 6

Results of student survey: Are You Organized?

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I write down my assignments and their due dates.	50%	47%	3%
My locker is well organized.	25%	63%	12%
I have extra supplies in my locker.	50%	38%	12%
I keep a notebook or folder for each class.	74%	21%	6%
Before I leave school, I check to make sure I have all materials I need.	53%	43%	4%
I set aside a specific time to do homework.	22%	49%	29%
I have a specific place to do my homework.	31%	43%	26%
I put homework ahead of outside activities.	22%	25%	53%
When I leave for school in the morning, I make sure I have all needed materials.	56%	38%	6%
I turn in my assignments on time.	63%	37%	0%
I am happy with my grades.	50%	49%	1%
I am an organized person.	29%	65%	6%

Organizational Skills are not Included in the Curriculum

One of the main causes for poor organization skills among students is that there is no formal curriculum for the teaching of study and organizational skills for all students (Schultz, 1998). "Lack of organizational skills may give the appearance of ignorance, but the areas of ignorance turn out to be the lack of these skills. When a student lacks organizational skills, instruction and study lack meaningfulness and will possibly be impossible to benefit from" (Hargis, 1997, p. 76). Organizational skills provide students with the structure they need in order to manage their school work. "Organizational skills are a form of problem solving that involves analyzing a learning task and devising a strategy appropriate for that particular situation" (Derry, 1998, p. 9). One of the organizational strategies that students have difficulty with is the strategy

of managing time effectively.

Time Management

One of the main contributors to student's lack of organizational skills is their ability to manage time effectively. "A large number of middle school and older students have significant difficulty in estimating how much time several types of assignments will require for quality results. There are serious problems when students either overestimate or underestimate the time required" (Kuepper, 1987, p. 108). If students could learn to manage time and organize, they would be more likely to find academic success. In a parent survey, 62 parents were asked how often their children set up a study schedule to complete long-term projects. Table 7 shows that 29% of parents responded by saying that their child never made a study schedule to complete long-term projects. This small time management skill could help students organize their time more effectively.

Table 7

Result of Parent Survey: Organizational Skills

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Every Day
How often does your child set up a study schedule to complete long term projects such a book reports?	29%	24%	19%	11%	17%
How often does your child have conflicts with extracurricular or outside activities that interfere with homework completion?	8%	6%	10%	29%	47%

Students often have difficulty making the transition from their elementary, self-contained classrooms to the middle school environment where they have approximately nine different teachers with varying academic expectations. With the increase of teachers and classes, added extracurricular activities and mounting social expectations, students are faced with the monumental challenge of these increased responsibilities. In a student survey, 68 students were asked how often they put homework ahead of outside activities. In a parent survey, 62 parents were asked how often their child has conflicts with extracurricular or outside activities that interfere with their homework. These outside activities included school and church activities, plus watching television, playing games, and socializing. Table 7 shows that almost half of parents stated that their children had conflicts every day that interfered with homework completion. While school and

homework take up a great deal of a student's time, it is during the middle school years that children also become more involved in extracurricular activities and other time consuming programs. Sports practice, church related activities, and even part time jobs such as babysitting take up a great deal of a student's time. Their social life at this time is also becoming more extensive. "In middle school, students often face real organizational responsibilities for the first time, often arriving in class and saying that they have forgotten their homework or they are not prepared" (Rafoth & Leal, 1993, p. 52). Table 8 shows that 29% of students never set aside a specific time to do homework, and 26% responded that they never have a specific place to do homework. Fifty-three percent of the targeted students responded that they never put homework ahead of outside activities (see Table 8). Parents can play a major part in helping their children learn time management skills.

Table 8

Results of Student Survey: Are you Organized

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I set aside a specific time to do homework.	22%	49%	29%
I have a specific place to do my homework.	31%	43%	26%
I put homework ahead of outside activities.	22%	25%	53%

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is crucial to the development of an adolescent's organizational skills. Teachers researchers at this site have found though experience that when students enter middle school and need additional support for a smooth transition, parents traditionally decrease their involvement in their children's education both at school and at home. Many parents have become weary of the education process by the time their children enter middle school. For other parents, increased work demands and family responsibilities take their toll (Foster, Harrison & Peel, 1995). "Parents themselves do not necessarily have a realistic concept of the time management problems which young teens face" (Eilers, Fox, Welvaert, Wood, 1998, p. 17). "When parental support is missing, students are less likely to succeed or show motivation to learn. Parents who do not make their child's education a priority encourage children to devalue education" (Rimm, 1997, p.19).

This lack of support can perpetuate the organization problems a child may have. A parent's view of education has an enormous impact on their children's developing views of education. Because education has changed tremendously in the past decade, it seems that parents are often uncertain about the changes, as well as the curriculum. "Some parents lose confidence in their ability to help their children with the subject matter itself" (Leitch & Tangri, 1988, p. 73). Table 9 shows that the majority of parents do not call Homework Hot line, check assignment notebooks, or check to see if homework is complete on a daily basis. Without parental involvement, students may continue to lack organizational skills. Parental involvement can have a tremendous impact on a student's self-esteem.

Table 9

Results of Parent Survey: Organizational Skills

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Every Day
How often do you ask your child about his/her day?	0%	2%	6%	19%	73%
How often do you call Homework Hot line?	10%	13%	26%	16%	35%
How often do you check your child's assignment notebook?	4%	5%	26%	27%	38%
How often do you check to see if your child's homework is complete?	5%	10%	25%	26%	34%

Self-Esteem

The way a student feels about himself affects school performance, motivation and a student's ability to organize effectively. "Throughout an individual's life, a sense of self-esteem can dramatically affect how well he does in school" (Amundson, 1991, p. 1). "Studies show that students with low self-esteem rarely do well in school, regardless of their ability" (Amundson, 1991, p. 6). If a student does not feel he will succeed, he probably will not. Low self-esteem may cause a student to give up too easily before really making a conscientious effort to complete a task. Not being immediately able to find the correct materials or book may cause a feeling of defeat. A well organized student who completes tasks promptly and manages time efficiently is more likely to have a healthy self-esteem.

Summary

The research indicates that disorganization is a widespread problem. According to the literature, the lack of formal curriculum in the area of organizational skills is one of the causes of disorganization. Time management also plays a key role in the organizational success of students. Parental involvement has an impact on the student's performance in school. Lastly, a student's self-esteem can have a profound affect in helping or hindering their academic success. Research collected offers many practical solutions to these problems.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

The lack of organizational skills negatively affects a student's academic performance; students who do not have these skills and strategies will not have a positive attitude toward learning and school in general. The possible causes for the lack of organizational skills have been discussed including lack of parental involvement, poor time management, low self esteem , and the absence of curriculum dealing with organizational skills. Several solutions to this problem have been suggested by educational researchers. Educators must teach organizational skills that include goal setting, time management, scheduling, and the proper use of class folders and assignment notebooks. Parents must take an active role in their student's daily organizational strategies, and work with the teacher to assure the highest level of success. Parents and teachers must also work together to improve the student's self-esteem in order to foster a more positive attitude.

The Curriculum

A student should not be expected to have intrinsic knowledge concerning organizational skills. Somewhere in their school career it must be taught, just as all other subjects are given instructional time. Organization skills instruction can have a particularly powerful impact on middle school students' performance. Middle school students should be taught how to improve these skills (Rafoth & Leal, 1993). Necessary organizational skills are time management, the use of assignment notebooks, and the correct usage of classroom folders. "There is a need to consider curricular adjustments that help teach the students to be organized and make effective use of their time" (Hargis, 1997, p. 81). The middle school years may be difficult for students when considering the amount of growth, not only academically, but physically and socially as well. While many school curriculums deal with the physical and social aspects of a student's education,

they must also incorporate strategies to aid the students in coping with these changes. Middle school students are becoming more active outside of the home, and these added activities must be balanced with the demands of their educational requirements.

Educators are the ones responsible for determining the amount and the focus of homework assignments. Teachers need to give careful thought to all assignments as to their value and necessity (Hinchey, 1996). While each school's curriculum mandates what is to be taught, the way it is taught can have a significant effect on a student's work. Giving more homework than is necessary to master a skill is detrimental to the student's work habits and may result in loss of willingness to complete an assignment. The teacher researchers at this site have found through experience that when a child feels overburdened with the amount of homework, he may not be able to successfully schedule his time to complete the task. Instead of giving an additional 20 math problems, for example, the teacher should stress the process of completing the original 10 problem assignment, rather than asking for more. Understanding the process of homework completion is just as important as mastering the concept being taught. The classroom teacher must be made aware of the necessary organizational skills that students need to be successful. They are the experts when it comes to determining what strategies students need to use to complete assignments, maintain good notebooks, and to schedule their time wisely. Teachers can work with each other to determine what needs to be taught for the student to accomplish these goals. "Focus on the curriculum. Faculties should band together to determine what key skills their students should know" (Gonder, 1991, p.12). Researchers propose a two year course taught in seventh and eight grade, focusing on organizational skills, and study habits, and especially time management (Bowers & Farr, 1984). At this site the perfect area for the teaching of organizational skills would be the advisory class, meeting first period in the morning. If an advisory class is not available, an organizational skills curriculum could be integrated somewhere else in the curriculum, as in homeroom or divided between core classes. This course should include hands on practice with keeping a daily, weekly, and monthly calendar. Teachers could model their own uses of these time management tools to set an example for their students. Sample assignment notebooks or sheets should be made available to the student so he will be able to determine personal preference. Students should be taught how to use folders to be used for each class. Locker maintenance should be discussed, and various ways of organizing lockers should be displayed. If calendars,

assignment notebooks, and folders are used properly, the problem of time management will be easier to solve.

An organizational strategy, PREPARE, (Ellis & Lenz, 1987) may be used to focus students on the importance of organization. Students need to be taught the strategy and have it modeled for them.

> Plan locker visits.
>
> Reflect on what you need to get (books, materials, needed homework)
>
> Erase personal needs and concentrate on school
>
> Psych yourself up for the class. Set a goal for the class. What to accomplish?
>
> Ask what has been going on in class and what you need to do.
>
> Review notes and study guides. Use assignment notebook
>
> Explore what you learned in class today

Using the PREPARE strategy can help students with goal setting and time management.

Time Management

Time management is an invaluable life long skill. Years of experience have taught the researchers that if a student can master the strategies of time management during his middle school years, he will be more successful in other areas of his life as well. Scheduling and goal setting are instrumental tools necessary for the well organized student.

"One of the best ways to help anyone be more in control of their own learning, thinking and productive efforts is to foster setting a goal" (Barell, 1992, p. 263) If students were taught how to break down their study time and longer assignments into shorter work periods, they may not feel as overwhelmed.

> It is important that we offer training to all students about how to break down assignments into smaller steps to be accomplished over time. Many students would chose to work with a plan if they realized that doing so meant less stress for them in school, as well as home. To help students to use schedules, we must talk about how long it takes to complete a particular task, and we must model how to break long term assignments down into small steps. Then, we must hold students accountable to accomplish each short term goal by a certain deadline. (Dodge, 1994, p. 75-76)

An example of breaking down a long term assignment would be when writing a final persuasive paper. Students should develop a time line for when each argument (or paragraph) needs to be complete. In this way, the assignment would not seem as overwhelming. The ability to break down long term assignments allows the students to accomplish smaller tasks and get more immediate satisfaction and fulfillment. This also allows the students to set smaller and more realistic goals that could be more easily met than a larger and longer term goal. Doing the harder tasks or sections of the assignment first is a strategy that permits the student a feeling of accomplishment (Hahn, 1985). In order to set realistic goals, students need to be able to schedule their time to be the most beneficial.

The setting of daily, weekly, and even monthly schedules should begin at the beginning of the school year (Haman & Isaacson, 1985). A daily assignment notebook is crucial to a student's organizational system. "Daily To-Do lists show particular objectives to be met on a particular day" (Hahn, 1985, p. 46). Included in the assignment notebook should be any homework assigned during various classes, extracurricular activities, appointments, and perhaps a record of test, quiz, or homework scores. This record should be checked by the student's advisor or homeroom teacher before leaving school at the end of the day and again in the morning before returning to school. If an advisory or homeroom program is not in evidence, perhaps the student's first period teacher would be the one responsible for the checking of the daily, weekly, and monthly calendars. If this is not possible, peer buddies or cooperative learning groups can be used. The use of these calendars can become the most vital tool that the student will use. In addition to the assignment notebook, a daily teacher checklist can be given to the targeted students with the most difficulty. This checklist can determine the student's homework completion, time on task, use of class folders and assignment notebook, and preparation with the necessary materials.

"Weekly schedules provide shorter goals in general and assure that enough time is provided to meet requirements for all subjects" (Hahn, 1985, p. 46). The use of a weekly calendar will enforce the need for more awareness of the time management needed for tasks that require more time and work than does the overnight homework assignment. Each Monday morning students should receive a blank calendar for the week that not only deals with schoolwork, but also includes outside of school commitments. This calendar should be distributed to the students by the teacher that has been designated to carry out this function. After the first few initial uses of the calendars,

students should be able to easily fill in the necessary information, and the amount of time to do this process should lessen. The goal is for the student to be eventually held responsible for the completion of his calendars, without the constant monitoring of the teacher. The mastery of weekly scheduling and planning will lead to a better understanding of goal setting.

"Monthly calendars provide an overview of the month's commitment so effective planning can be done and conflicts about time can be avoided" (Hahn, 1985, p.47). Looking at the big picture will give an overview of what needs to be accomplished and the time frame needed to complete the tasks. The monthly calendar should deal with long term goal setting and provide the student with a larger framework in which to schedule their activities. It will also provide both the student and the parent with a concrete picture of expectations and responsibilities.

Parental Involvement

A child's education is a team effort. Neither the teacher nor the parent alone is responsible for the child's academic growth. There must be a partnership between home and school in order to foster the best possible learning atmosphere.

> Many researchers have concluded that education is the shared responsibility of teachers, parents, and students. Therefore, all three groups need to be involved in solving the problem of middle school students' loss of commitment to their schoolwork. Parents and students need to be considered coproducers of education in partnership with the school. (Davies, 1987, p.43)

In addition to a partnership between home and school, parent and teacher, the student must also be made to feel an important part in his own learning experiences. It is important to develop two way communication between teacher and parent; it is also necessary that the student be informed and involved in this communication (Epstein, 1996). The researchers have found through many years of experience that when students take ownership of their educational experiences, they will become more involved and will be more apt to take control over their development. An active role will encourage students to become better decision makers, thus allowing them to experience a higher level of success. "Students must be made to realize that they are not merely passive receivers of education. Indeed, they are in charge of their own learning, creating it with the help of parents and teachers" (Watson, 1978, p. 26).

"It is important for teachers to stress why strategies work, for both teachers and parents to model these strategies, and to cue students to apply strategies" (Rafoth & Leal, 1993, p. 52). In order to facilitate this partnership between home and school, it is necessary for the teacher to maintain consistent channels of open communications. Weekly communication, both written and oral are necessary components of a successful partnership between home and school for students who are failing or who are not meeting the level of success that they would like. A weekly phone call to the parents of floundering students can keep the parents informed of the progress the student is making, the areas of organization that have been mastered, and the areas that still need some improvement. Sending home a weekly progress report can allow the parents and the student to assess the strengths and weaknesses. Parents will find it easier to assist their children if they are provided a list of concrete examples of how to help their children learn, from setting up a study environment to supervising homework completion, to acknowledging student performance (Sandfort, 1987). A concrete list of parent tips can be found in, "How to Help Your Child with Organization," (see Appendix D). "Student accountability also is enhanced when the teachers and parents frequently monitor students' academic progress" (Oickle & Reeves, 1991, p. 7). Parents have tremendous power to affect their children's achievement. Not only do they have life skills and knowledge to share, but by being involved in their children's schooling, they have also sent the message that school is important (Hester, 1989). Constant feedback, both positive and constructive, will foster a growth in self esteem.

Student Self Esteem

The researchers have found that students with low academic success have little or no self esteem; constant failure provides no positive feedback which in turn causes negative attitudes towards self and school. In order to be successful, a child needs to feel good about their accomplishments which in turn allows them to feel good about themselves. "Teachers play a critical role in enhancing students self esteem. The most important thing teachers can do is to hold appropriately high expectations for all students and be instrumental in their achievement" (Amundson, 1991, p. 13). The researchers at this site have determined through many years of teaching experience that students who receive no positive feedback will resign themselves to failure. They will see no need to continue to attempt to meet the qualifications set up by the teacher because of the lack of previous success. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to be certain

that the child does succeed in some way, and when this occurs, there must be positive reinforcement. Children need success and applause. It encourages new effort (Chess, 1974).

There are several methods to institute positive reinforcement and assure some measure of success. "Several studies have found that students who are given special tutoring or other help show an increase in self esteem as their academic performance improves" (Amundson, 1991, p. 14). Time spent with a student before or after school, during free periods, or at lunch will offer chances for extra help to accomplish a given task.

While students need to be informed of the areas in which they need improvement, it is also necessary to inform them of their strengths. There needs to be a balance between adverse and favorable criticism and comments. A negative constructive comment is always easier to accept when it is preceded or followed by one that is positive. A teacher needs to focus on strengths and emphasize the positives. They should catch the student doing something well, and give more positive than negative feedback. Teachers should not reinforce negative thinking. What a student thinks will happen is often what will happen (Johnson, as cited in Krupp, 1992).

While there has been some controversy about the use of a reward system for positive achievement, the researchers believe there can be no harm in acknowledging a student's success, whether it be with a verbal reinforcement or a concrete token of recognition. Although some researchers believe that materialistic rewards do not motivate students to better achievement, others have found that a reward of any kind reinforces positive actions (Amundson, 1991). "Institute a system of rewards and incentives for students. Such a program should recognize as broad a range of accomplishments as possible" (Amundson, 1991, p. 17). Rewards are appropriate for many situations. Receiving an above average grade on a test or project, consistently completing homework assignments, keeping up with the assignment notebook, coming to class prepared, maintaining a neat and organized locker, correctly using classroom folders, or coming in for extra help are all worthwhile examples for bestowing rewards.

Rewards may take many different forms. While some may be certificates of recognition, others might be specific privileges granted. These may include extra computer game time, free time, longer recess period, or being allowed to choose their own seat in the classroom. Still other methods of rewards may include homework passes, ice cream passes, tokens for candy or materials, or a special delivery lunch. Rewards make tangible the teacher's pride and satisfaction

with the child's efforts (Slavin, 1991). Praise is something one strives for because it makes one feel good about ones self and ones accomplishments. Whether it comes in the form of words or materials, a student's pride in himself and self-esteem will improve.

Improving a student's self-esteem is directly related to their performance (Slavin, 1991). Students who feel good about themselves will continue to work to reinforce this positive feeling. Being organized builds self-esteem.

Summary

The teacher researchers of the targeted classrooms believe that the incorporation of organizational skills in the basic curriculum is necessary to the present and future success of all students. It is a life long strategy that must be mastered before true success can be attained. Time management is essential to setting and accomplishing goals, both short and long term. Teachers must maintain consistent communication between home and school, stressing the importance of both the child's and the parent's involvement. The combination of curriculum adjustments, time management and goal setting strategies, and parental involvement will instill in the student a renewed sense of self esteem, which will in turn lead to more academic success.

Many students have a lack of organizational skills. The use of a weekly teacher checklist will help the student with immediate feedback as to their success and performance in the classroom. This will also allow the advisor to conduct a daily conference with the student concerning their teacher's comments. The topics covered would include what assignments were due, which ones were assigned, and whether the student was on task during the duration of the class. While this at first may be time consuming, after a few sessions a daily conference may not be necessary. Once a week may be all that is needed to keep a student on task. An assignment notebook gives the student responsibility and enables the parent and the student to discuss the daily activities and any homework given that day. Classroom folders will aid the student with keeping materials neat and in an organized manner. Teaching organizational skills to each advisory, and stressing the notebook, folders, and parental involvement will lead the students toward success and positive achievement.

Project Objective

As a result of improving student organizational skills from September 13,1999, to January 21, 2000, the targeted sixth and eighth grade students will increase their academic success. This will be measured by weekly teacher checklists, weekly progress reports, and final grade point averages.

Process Statements

In order to accomplish the project objectives, the following procedures are necessary:

1. Teach organizational skills to all advisories
2. Increase the amount of parent contact and involvement
3. Use daily monitoring and conferencing with targeted students

Action Plan

I. Collection of Data to show evidence that the problem exists.

- A. Determine Target Group
  1. Examine previous year's GPA of sixth and eighth grade students (August, 1999)
  2. Check student files for evidence to determine reasons for low GPA
  3. Select target students with GPA below 2.0 and with frequently missing assignments
- B. Parent Survey
- C. Student Survey

II. Implementation of Teaching of Organizational Skills

- A. Time Frame
  1. Advisory Class
  2. Begin September 13, 1999
  3. Concluded by October 8, 1999
  3. One class period per week (40 minutes)
- B. Skills Taught
  1. Use of assignment notebook
  2. Use of class folders
  3. Locker maintenance

4. Time Management
    a) Weekly scheduling of time
    b) Monthly scheduling of time

III. Conferencing and Monitoring

A. Parent Involvement
    1. Weekly phone contact
    2. Weekly progress report sent to parent

B. Student Responsibility
    1. Completing assignment notebook daily
    2. Maintaining organized locker
    3. Keeping class folders in order

C. Weekly Teacher Checklist
    1. Receive each Monday from advisor
    2. Completed by each classroom teacher weekly
    3. Returned to and discussed with advisor at the end of the week

IV. Promoting Positive Student Attitude

A. Rewards for successful weekly reports
    1. Homework pass
    2. Ice cream pass
    3. Free time with games or computers

B. More one on one conferencing with student
    1. Meet at beginning and end of the day (5 minute conference)
    2. Lunch date once a month

C. Positive reinforcement and feedback
    1. One positive phone call home every month
    2. Daily encouragement and compliments

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of these interventions, an analysis will be done of students' pre and post GPA's and beginning and ending organizational surveys. Weekly teacher checklists will be reviewed to determine improvement in academic success.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this action research project was to improve student organizational skills in order to increase targeted students' academic progress. The steps of intervention for this project included teaching organizational skills to all sixth and eighth advisory classes, conferencing with students and monitoring their progress through the use of weekly teacher checklists, increasing amount of parental contact, and promoting positive student attitudes. No deviations from the original plan took place.

Organizational and study skills were taught to all sixth and eighth grade advisory classes one period per week for a period of six weeks. Topics that were included were the proper use of assignment notebooks, keeping both weekly and monthly calendars, keeping notebooks and folders neat and organized according to classes, and time management. A total of 15 students were targeted by the researchers. Three students were chosen from each researcher's advisory. The target students were determined by previous year's grade point averages. Advisors met with their target students each morning in the advisory class and again at the end of each day for a period of five minutes. At this time the student's progress was discussed, and the weekly teacher checklist was also discussed. Parent phone calls were made to relate the academic success of the student for that week. Weekly progress reports were also sent home at this time. When student weekly progress was positive, a reward was given. These included homework passes, candy, or computer time. This process continued for a period of 4 months, at which time the results were computed.

Presentations and Analysis of Results

The results of this action research project were determined by comparing grade point averages, teachers' weekly checklists and anecdotal notes, and by comparing pre and post parent

and student surveys.

Grade Point Averages

Student records were acquired (see Appendix E). The students' previous years' grade point averages were compared with their grade point averages from the first two quarters of the present year as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Comparison of Past and Present GPA

Student	GPA June 1999	GPA November 1999	GPA January 2000
6A	1.75	2.0	2.65
6B	1.50	1.65	1.55
6C	1.75	2.75	2.44
6D	1.75	2.00	1.75
6E	1.67	2.00	2.00
6F	1.35	1.42	1.25
8A	1.50	1.62	1.20
8B	1.20	.50	.62
8C	1.25	2.25	1.75
8D	2.00	2.25	2.25
8E	1.50	1.67	1.67
8F	.50	.62	1.0
8G	1.48	.625	.750
8H	1.45	2.37	1.50
8I	1.83	1.50	1.00

The targeted students are represented by a number standing for their grade level and a letter to differentiate between students. Only 20% of the targeted students showed any significant rise in grade point average. The other 80% stayed basically the same or went down. However, the student survey showed that there were improvements in other areas.

Student Survey

A pre and post survey was given to all advisories. Out of the 68 surveys given, focus was placed on the 15 sixth and eighth grade targeted students. Table 11 shows the results of the targeted students' responses to both the pre and post organizational surveys given.

Table 11
Results of Targeted Students' Pre and Post Responses to Student Survey

	Always Pre/Post %	Sometimes Pre/Post %	Never Pre/Post %
I write down my assignments and their due dates.	20/80	67/20	13/0
My locker is well organized.	20/40	47/20	33/40
I have extra supplies in my locker.	7/53	20/33	73/14
I keep a notebook or folder for each class.	20/60	33/40	47/0
Before I leave school, I check to make sure I have all materials I need.	33/33	47/40	20/27
I set aside a specific time to do homework.	7/13	27/33	66/54
I have a specific place to do my homework.	53/53	27/33	20/14
I put homework ahead of outside activities.	7/20	20/27	73/53
When I leave for school in the morning, I make sure I have all needed materials.	20/27	53/40	27/33
I turn in my assignments on time.	13/20	87/80	0/0
I am happy with my grades.	7/13	87/67	7/20
I am an organized person.	33/40	47/47	20/13

According to the pre and post surveys, a substantial improvement in organizational skills was shown in four areas. Of the fifteen targeted students surveyed in August, 20% percent stated that they never wrote down assignments or due dates, but the post survey now indicates that this number increased to 80%. Therefore, 60% more of the targeted students consistently wrote down their assignments in their assignment notebooks. Twenty percent of the targeted students stated that they always kept a notebook or folder for each class. This percentage rose to 60%. When asked if extra supplies were kept in their locker, only 7% initially responded to always. The post

survey revealed that this percentage changed to 53%. When responding to the statement, "My locker is well organized," 20% originally answered always, as opposed to the concluding 40%. The other categories displayed in Table 9 do not show a substantial shift in responses. After computing the results of the student surveys, the parent results of the parent surveys were then determined.

Parent Survey

A pre and post survey was given to all parents. Out of the 68 surveys given, focus was placed on the 15 sixth and eighth grade targeted parents. Table 12 shows the results of the targeted parents' responses to both the pre and post organizational surveys given.

According to the pre and post parent surveys, there were no substantial changes in any of the areas, although a slight change did occur in two of the areas. An increase was shown when referring to the setting up of a study schedule for long term projects. The percentage of frequently and everyday rose from 14% to 33%. The second area that displayed a rise in the percentage rate refers to the question, " How often does your child bring necessary materials home to complete assignments?" The categories of frequently and every day rose from 33% to 60%. The other categories remained basically the same. After the parent surveys were analyzed, the researchers reviewed the teacher checklists and anecdotal records.

Teacher Checklists and Anecdotal Records

During the period that this action research project transpired, weekly checklists and anecdotal records (see Appendix F) were collected from each of the targeted students' teachers. Eighty-three percent of these weekly records showed missing homework, late homework, or the lack of necessary materials. Only three of the fifteen targeted students, or 20%, consistently showed positive weekly reports. These reports were relayed to the parents.

Parents were contacted on a weekly basis, either by telephone or email. Updates of the student's weekly assignments were given to the parents, as well as notification of missing work. Upcoming projects, tests, and quizzes were announced. Parents always responded to these communications with positive attitudes and promises to follow up with their child. The researchers found that this communication was more immediate through the use of the email system. After all results were considered, conclusions and recommendations were decided.

Table 12

Results of Parent Pre and Post Survey: Organizational Skills by Percentage

	Never Pre/Post	Seldom Pre/Post	Sometimes Pre/Post	Frequently Pre/Post	Every Day Pre/Post
How often do you ask your child about his/her day?	0/0	7/7	20/20	33/33	40/40
How often do you call Homework Hot line?	40/33	33/27	20/27	7/13	0/0
How often do you check your child's assignment notebook?	7/0	13/7	27/33	33/40	20/20
How often do you check to see if your child's homework is complete?	20/27	20/20	27/33	20/7	13/13
Does your child display organizational skills?	13/20	27/27	13/13	27/20	20/20
How often does your child have school materials organized for return to school?	27/27	13/13	33/40	13/13	13/7
How often does your child complete tasks on time?	13/7	27/20	33/47	13/20	13/7
How often does your child have conflicts with extracurricular or outside activities that interfere with homework completion?	20/27	13/13	40/40	20/13	7/7
How often does your child set up a study schedule to complete long term projects such a book reports?	27/13	27/13	33/40	7/20	7/13
How often does your child bring necessary materials home to complete assignments?	20/7	27/7	20/27	20/33	13/27

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the student and teacher surveys, final grade point averages, and teacher anecdotal checklists, it is the finding of these researchers that the action research plan had mixed results. While students showed an improvement in certain aspects of organizational skills, there did not seem to be an overall improvement in grade point averages. There are several components that

contributed to this.

First, parental support was not as complete as it should have been. Although parents were contacted on a weekly basis with updates of their child's performance, they did not carry through with any program of continuing organizational skills study at home. Questions 2, 3 and 4 on the parent survey exhibit that the parents were not really actively involved. This was due, in part, to several severe family issues including the returning of an adopted child, truancy, and running away from home. Without prior knowledge of these issues, and the means to deal with them, there was little back up from the family. Without any reinforcement of the organizational skills taught in school, there was no follow up stressed.

Secondly, no consideration of the child's emotional or medical makeup was taken into consideration when the targeted students were selected. Several of the targeted students were seeing counselors and psychologists because of emotional problems that were not school related. In addition, seven out of the fifteen students (or 46%) were on medication for various forms of ADD. These medications were inconsistently given due to outside influences or changed frequently throughout the time that the action plan was in progress. Fourteen percent of the targeted students were diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder. These emotional and medical problems presented too much of an obstacle to the students' performances in school for them to be able to overcome.

The areas of organizational skills that could be monitored at school seemed to be the ones that improved the most. Teachers and advisors could easily propel the students into maintaining an organized locker. The writing down of daily homework in the assignment notebooks could easily be monitored by the classroom teacher. Making sure each student had notebooks and folders for each class is another area that is easily maintained and overseen by the advisor or teacher. Helping students keep extra supplies in their locker is an area that is also monitored by the teacher. These areas improved only with constant supervision by the advisor or teacher. Any organizational skill that required the student to be self-motivated did not seem to improve. It was the objective of this research project to insure that the teaching of organizational skills would create a more independent learner, one who would be self-motivated to learn and improve both their grade point averages and their organizational skills. However, the intrinsic value of being organized did not develop.

Although this action research plan did not meet with total success, information was gained that would lead to a more successful program. This information includes the teaching of organizational skills at an earlier age, employing support staff, and providing parent education classes.

It is the recommendation of these researchers that organizational skills needs to be an integral part of the curriculum, beginning at the earliest possible age. Learning how to organize materials and time is an ongoing process; it must be practiced and repeated constantly. If the teaching of organizational skills were implemented into the curriculum at grade one, and continued throughout the elementary and middle school years, the students would be able to work from the foundation that had been built. Skills learned in school would be able to be transferred to conditions at home as well.

The understanding and knowledge of a child's emotional, medical, and family background is crucial to helping the child achieve a high organizational level. This information must be made known before any program can be put into effect. Utilizing service and support staff at the school would be beneficial in many ways. Support staff can give information concerning students' medical background as well as a special education service history. Support staff can be valuable in helping with any special modifications that need to be given. During staffings, advisors can be present to gather any pertinent information.

Showing a transfer of organizational skills from the school environment to the home environment is necessary because it instills in the student the idea of transfer. In order to accomplish this, parental involvement must be superior. Just as students must be taught the various elements of organizational skills, so must the parents. Several classes should be offered at the onset of the program to make available to parents the skills and the knowledge that will be given to the student. Parents would then be able to reinforce these skills at home. The consistency of stressing organizational skills at home would easily transfer to the school.

Being organized is not just a skill needed in school; it is a skill needed to survive in life. Learning how to plan and manage time, formulate study strategies, maintain clear assignment notebooks, and set priorities is crucial to success and positive self image. More research, however, needs to be done to indicate whether students need to learn organizational skills before they will be totally successful in any environment. Research may also indicate whether a specific

curriculum that is consistently taught throughout the early and middle years and through constant modeling and reinforcement both at school and in the home would be beneficial to the student as a life long learner.

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APPENDIX A
PARENT LETTER

September 7, 1999

Dear Parents,

As part of my Master's Degree program, I am conducting an action research project in order to assist students with organizational skills to improve their academic success. Students will be asked to maintain a daily assignment notebook, use folders for each class, and submit at the end of each day a teacher checklist which reflects the quality of their classroom accomplishments for that day. Activities will be integrated into the regular advisory program in which all children will participate. This project will begin on Monday, September 13th and end on Friday, January 21st. At no time will any of the student's information be made public.

I will need your consent to include your child's data in my results. Refusal to have your child's information included will in no way penalize your child or affect any grade. If you have any questions concerning this project, please feel free to contact me at 847-870-3879. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Yes, my child's information may be included in the results. _____

No, my child's information may not be included in the results. _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Please return by Friday, September 10th.

APPENDIX B

PARENT SURVEY

PARENT SURVEY: ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

As we begin a new school year, I would appreciate input on how you view your involvement in your child's education and how you view your child's organizational skills. This information will assist me in my action research project. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return to me by Friday, September 10th. I welcome any additional comments you may wish to make. Thank you in advance for your time.

1. How often do you ask your child about his/her day?

   Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

   COMMENTS:

2. How often do you call Homework Hotline?

   Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

   COMMENTS:

3. How often do you check your child's assignment notebook?

   Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

   COMMENTS:

4. How often do you check to see if your child's homework is complete?

   Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

   COMMENTS:

5. Does your child display organizational skills?

   Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

   COMMENTS:

6. How often does your child have school materials organized for return to school?

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

COMMENTS:

7. How often does your child complete tasks on time?

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

COMMENTS:

8. How often does your child have conflicts with extracurricular or outside activities that interfere with homework completion?

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

COMMENTS:

9. How often does your child set up a study schedule to complete long term projects such as book reports?

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

COMMENTS:

10. How often does your child bring necessary materials home to complete assignments?

Never Seldom Sometimes Frequently Every Day

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX C
STUDENT SURVEY

Name_____

section_____

Are You Organized?

A Student Survey

Organizational Skills are an important part of doing well in school. Let's see how organized you are by completing this survey. Just put an X in the box that best describes you.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I write down my assignments and their due dates.			
My locker is well organized.			
I have extra supplies in my locker.			
I keep a notebook or folder for each class.			
Before I leave school, I check to make sure I have all materials I need.			
I set aside a specific time to do homework.			
I have a specific place to do my homework.			
I put homework ahead of outside activities.			
When I leave for school in the morning, I make sure I have all needed materials.			
I turn in my assignments on time.			
I am happy with my grades.			
I am an organized person.			

APPENDIX D

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH ORGANIZATION

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH ORGANIZATION

Consider the following suggestions when helping your student.

1. Encourage your child to use his assignment notebook, and ask your child to show you his notebook and to tell about the information that he has recorded each day.

2. Have your child call HOMEWORK HOTLINE daily to check if all assignments have been written down correctly in his assignment notebook.

3. Help your child develop an organizational system for his papers, using notebooks, folders, binder, etc.

4. Help your child set short-term and long-term goals.

5. Help your child set steps toward the accomplishment of each goal.

6. Contact your child's advisor for assistance or with any questions you may have regarding your child's organizational skills.

7. Help your child create a home calendar of important due dates and events that you and your child can refer to together.

8. Help your child plan a specific time to study and work on homework each day.

9. Help your child find a suitable setting for homework and studying and make that setting as pleasant as possible.

10. Encourage your child to become responsible for his own actions. If his tasks are performed for him or if excuses are made for poor performances, a student will not learn to be organized and responsible.

APPENDIX E

STUDENT RECORD INFORMATION

Student Record Information

Name_____

4th Quarter Grades:

Literature_____
Math_____
Language Arts_____
Social Studies_____
Science_____

Grade Point Average:_____

Deficiency Information:_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional Information:_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX F

TEACHER ANECDOTAL RECORDS

Student_____ Advisor_____

Teacher Observation Checklist - Teacher initials means student has completed skill.

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.
Attends to task					
Has necessary supplies & materials					
Turns in assignments					
Maintains assignment notebook					
Uses folders appropriately					

Comments:_____

_____